



New voluntary pre-employment service for parents with young children

Provider fact sheet

A new parent-driven service will support parents to work toward their education and employment goals. From 1 November 2024, the voluntary pre-employment service will be available to eligible parents of young children. Parents and stakeholders have been, and will continue to be, major contributors to the development and roll-out of the new service.

Service features

Parents will have **choice and flexibility** about:

- when they access the service,
- where and how they receive support (i.e. provider office, over the phone, local community centre),
- how often and for how long they get support,
- what they want to work towards (i.e., skills development and training, securing a driver's license, language skills, meeting other parents etc),
- when/if they want to leave or take time away from the service,
- being welcomed back to the service when the time is right for them.

The service will **value parents' caring role** ensuring:

- safe, private and child friendly offices
- appointments and support that factor in school or child care
- parent control over the time commitment for appointments and supported activities.

Mentors who support parents will be:

- suitably qualified or experienced, including lived experience
- able to build trusting relationships over time
- consistent – with the same mentor supporting a parent for their whole time in service (where possible)
- able to deliver on what they commit to
- able to work with parents by supporting their choices and agency.

Financial support will be available to parents:

- to facilitate access to supports and work toward goals
- through an Individual Fund assigned to the parent to allocate in a way that helps them achieve their goals
- through a Pooled Fund which is managed by the service provider for the purpose of providing pre-employment support to parents.

Parent's **individual needs** will be acknowledged:

- through tailored servicing, designed specifically for the parent and their individual circumstances.

Transparency and clear communication will be a focus at all times, but in particular:

- before parents agree to participate in the service, so they understand the service offer
- during servicing, parents will be informed of the options available to them, and be able to ask for flexibility and choice
- when making decisions about how to use financial supports.

Eligibility

To be eligible for the new voluntary pre-employment service, parents must:

- have a child aged under 6
- not be in paid employment
- live in a non-remote area.

Parents should be getting one of these payments:

- Parenting Payment
- Carer Payment
- Special Benefit.

Parents are also eligible if not getting a Centrelink payment, and are either:

- under 22 years old
- an early school leaver (parents who don't have a Year 12 qualification)
- First Nations.

Delivery of the service

The department will undertake an approach to market process to engage organisations to deliver the new service. This approach will be designed to ensure that organisations with the relevant skills and experience, and which present the best value for money, are engaged. The approach to market will be conducted in accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules. Given the different approach in this service, the department anticipates a diverse range of organisations will be interested in this opportunity and welcomes this interest.

Australian Public Service pilot

An Australian Public Service (APS) Pilot will be part of the new service in one region or location. The APS Pilot will deliver a service consistent with the national service delivered by a network of providers. This allows APS capability building, including service delivery, as part of the wider Australian Government APS reform agenda.

Parent Advisory Group

A Parents Advisory Group will be established to ensure parents with lived experience, and key stakeholders, continue to contribute to the development and, once up and running, will provide insights and feedback that will inform continuous improvement of the new service.

Evaluation and capacity building

The service will undergo formal evaluation and ongoing monitoring. The department will work with providers to build and maintain capacity and foster continuous improvement in providing support for parents.